excluded Volleyball team from participation in the coming Asian games; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the basic criteria for enlisting the sports disciplines for including in international events and the precise role of Indian Olympic Association therein;

(c) whether the Volleyball Federation of India has strongly criticized Indian Olympic Association for its decision; and

(d) what remedial measures his Ministry propose to take to ensure that the players are not disappointed after so much preparation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) It is not correct to say that the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has excluded the Volleyball team from participation in Asian Games at Bankok. However, the Government did not clear its participation as it did not qualify according to the criteria set by Government.

(b) The Government has decided the following basic criteria for selecting the individuals/teams for the Asian Games 1998. They were as follows:

(i) For individuals: Second place in the last Asian Games or Asian Championship, whichever is better.

(ii) For Team events: Third place in the last Asian Games or Asian Championship whichever is better.

The precise role of the IOA in this regard is that it should recommend the teams and individuals taking due account of the criterial fixed for the clearance for participation in international events.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The IOA and Federations will be asked to prepare our teams and sportspersons so that they qualify for participation in such international events.

Unemployed Engineers

1502. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHVAJI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of unemployed engineers in the country; and

(b) what action is proposed to be taken to utilize their services through gainful unemployment?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) As per the latest report of the Institute of Applied Manpower Research, New Delhi, the number of unemployed engineers till 1996 were 23473 at Degree level and 60447 at Diploma level.

(b) Opportunities for Apprenticeship Training with stipend are available for the engineering pass-outs under the Apprenticeship Act which can not only help to enhance the professional competence but also provides better employment opportunities.

Formation of National Reconstruction Corps

1503. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have contemplated to form a National Reconstruction Corps; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons thnerefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) As laid down in the "National Agenda for Governance" of the Government and based on the discussions held with State Governments, Representatives of political parties, Members of Parliament, Youth Organisations, etc., a scheme for the